

Application No: 10/710,693

REMARKSClaim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-4, 7 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Ikegaya (U.S. Pat. No. 6,439,663). Claims 10-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(a) as being anticipated by Ikegaya.

Applicant has amended independent claims 1 and 10 to clarify the invention. For example, the fastener is formed with a retainer portion and a slide portion. The retainer portion is arranged and constructed to increase flexural rigidity of the fastener. Moreover, the clearance between the second housing and the fastener can be appropriately controlled by means of the retainer portion and the slide portion. These features of the invention are made possible by the combination of the retainer portion and the slide portion, and are not found in the prior art.

In contrast, Ikegaya teaches a binding frame having multiple concaved regions. Ikegaya also teaches that the binding frame has expanded areas, each having a hole. The Office Action states that the concaved regions and the expanded areas taught by Ikegaya respectively correspond to the slide portion and the retainer portion. However, the expanded areas of Ikegaya are intended to attach a seat reclining apparatus to a seat cushion. The expanded areas of Ikegaya do not increase rigidity of the binding frame. Therefore, the expanded areas of Ikegaya do not correspond to the retainer portion of the present invention. Accordingly, Ikegaya does not teach or suggest the retainer portion of the present invention. Moreover, Ikegaya does not teach or suggest the claimed combination of the retainer portion and the slide portion. For at least these reasons, Applicant believes that the inventions defined in claims 1 and 10, and their depending claims, are patentably distinct from the inventions taught by the cited reference.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 5, 6 and 8 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were indicated allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

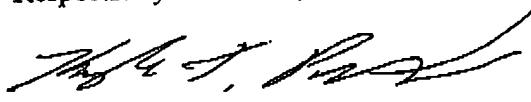
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CONCLUSION

Claims 1-15 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 10 are amended. In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned if the Examiner believes it would be useful to advance prosecution.

Respectfully submitted,



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